

NOTES ON THE IMMATURE STAGES OF
EUPLOEA DARCHIA DARCHIA (W.S. MACLEAY)
(LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE)

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Abstract

The immature stages of *Euploea darchia darchia* (W.S. Macleay) from the Northern Territory are described and *Malaisia scandens* (Lour.) Planchon (Moraceae) recorded as a food plant.

Introduction

The Darwin brown crow *Euploea darchia darchia* (W.S. Macleay) is known from north-western Australia and the Northern Territory. It is common at Darwin (Common and Waterhouse 1981). The early stages have not been described but the larva of the east coast subspecies *E. d. niveata* (Butler) is reported to feed on *Malaisia scandens* (Common and Waterhouse 1981).



Figs 1-2. *Euploea darchia darchia*, final instar larva.

Immature stages

Food plant: Malaisia scandens (Moraceae).

Egg: Lemon yellow, ribbed, rounded apically; approximate size 1 mm x 0.5 mm.

First instar larva: Body translucent yellow-green with three pairs of very small black tubercles on segments 2, 3 and 11; head black.

Final instar larva (Figs 1, 2): Three pairs of dark brown tubercles, orange-brown towards base, on segments 2, 3 and 11; body translucent brown; segments 4-11 with a series of 5 transverse cream dorsolateral bands on each segment; bands divided dorsally; the first band is the thickest, made up of four joined spots; successive series of bands sometimes separated by a fine band of very small spots; orange-brown bands on segment 12; anal plate black; a broken, cream subspiracular band present, edged with orange-brown; spiracles and legs black; head black with white markings. Size approximately 38-40 mm.

Pupa: Translucent yellow-green at first, turning chrome after approximately two days. Similar in shape to that of *E. core corinna* (W.S. Macleay) but smaller. Approximate size 10 mm x 6 mm.

Discussion

Eggs were laid singly on the underside of new growth of the host plant. Eggs hatched on average in five days, with larvae taking a further 12-16 days to pupate. Adults emerged on average eight days later. Eggs and early instar larvae generally were found from mid to late March and throughout April.

Larval coloration and pattern is similar to that of *E. core amymone* (Godart) as figured by Ackery and Vane-Wright (1984). Freshly emerged adults occur in Darwin during April and May. Adults generally are found around coastal vine scrub, usually on the verges of swampy areas or within monsoon forests associated with inland watercourses. As with other species of *Euploea* Fabricius, adults congregate in shady areas during the day, resting on sticks, branches or vines.

Acknowledgment

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References

- ACKERY, P.R. and VANE-WRIGHT, R.I. 1984. *Milkweed Butterflies*. British Museum. (Natural History), London; pp ix + 425.
- COMMON, I.F.B. and WATERHOUSE, D.F. 1981. *Butterflies of Australia*. Angus and Robertson, Sydney; pp xiv + 682.